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**CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
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**Comment on Iraq's Political Crisis**

The appointment on 23 November of the pro-British Iraqi Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Nur al-Din Mahmud, as Prime Minister indicates that while Iraq will probably remain pro-West, its political crisis is not yet over. The general's control of the army will enable him to maintain internal order, but since he is apparently little interested in politics and has no platform, he does not answer Iraq's need for political and economic reforms. Moreover, his appointment as Chief of Staff in July 1951 aroused strong opposition because of his pro-Kurdish sympathies, his alleged "bungling" in the Palestinian war, and reported corruption in the army.

Nur al-Din's assumption of the premiership resulted from a deteriorating political situation brought on by mounting nationalist, reformist and radical discontent. This sentiment has crystallized in opposition to projected plans for the coming elections. Extremist parties intent upon several reforms, in particular direct elections of deputies, have threatened to boycott the elections.

The imposition of martial law in Baghdad, the suspension of the press and the dissolution of political parties will not halt the unrest. Aroused public feeling puts greater pressure on Iraq's governing classes to grant sorely needed reforms. Moreover, it creates an unfavorable atmosphere for renewal of the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty, for agreements with foreign oil companies, and for Iraq's acceptance of MEDO.

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